

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

WHY AM I ALWAYS LOOKING FOR TROUBLE?

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Yesterday I had a long talk with dear Aunt Mary. When I came into her room at the hospital I saw that she knew her operation had done nothing for her.

"Margie," she said, as I kissed her, "I have just found out that I will never leave the hospital alive."

"Don't say that, dear Aunt Mary," I exclaimed, as the tears started from my eyes.

"Don't cry, dear, it will not help matters. I don't want you to grieve, but I do want you to remember—I want you to just keep on loving me, dear."

"I shall keep on loving you, dearest Aunt Mary, but my heart is breaking with the thought that you in that shadowy land we know not cannot keep on loving me."

"Perhaps I will—who knows?" she murmured as she patted my hand. "I am so glad that I arranged everything before I came here. All I have to do now is to prepare for a dignified exit. I hope, however, that I shall live until Mary gets better. She is going to get better?" she asked anxiously.

"I trust so, although the doctor gives up little hope at present."

"Is she still delirious?"

"Yes."

"And still calls for Jack?"

"Yes."

"Isn't it strange that a woman's heart should be made of such material that it will cast out everything but the one great love in a crisis?"

"That, dear Aunt Mary, has always been our undoing."

"Have you seen Eleanor today?" Aunt Mary asked.

"No," I answered, thinking it strange that she should bring her into the conversation right here.

"She is a splendid nurse, Margie, sympathetic, untiring and vigilant. I

have grown very fond of her. I wish I could make her a little present. What do you think she would like?"

"I am sure she would like anything you would give her, my dear Aunt Mary," I answered, oddly taking myself to task for feeling that I wished dear Aunt Mary would not love Eleanor Fairlow.

I could not understand why I felt like that, for the few times that Eleanor Fairlow and I had been together alone and had really seemed to get under each other's skin I have felt that I could like her better than any other woman I have ever known. She has much the same ideas to life that I have. We seem to be very much alike—inside. She seems to be very straightforward and direct. She seems to hate lies and unfairness and yet—there is always something that I can't "get under"—something that always keeps me at a little distance, something which seems to tell me that she would like to love me but dares not.

Now, little book, don't think I am fanciful and silly to feel thus. I don't believe I am jealous of Eleanor Fairlow, for if I am I am a very narrow-minded person. Certainly I have had no occasion to be so and if I had not heard that Eleanor and Dick were lovers before Dick married me I expect I would not think anything about them being such friends. Because I feel this way I punished myself by telling dear Aunt Mary that I were in her place I would buy Eleanor an exquisite watch which I saw yesterday down town and wanted very much myself. Dear Aunt Mary immediately signed her name to the check for \$100 and I went down town and bought it.

Yesterday Eleanor Fairlow came to me, her face all aglow. "Margie, I have you to thank as much as Aunt Mary. The watch, with its beautiful